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THE RÔLE OF LIVE STOCK IN MALARIA PROPHYLAXIS.

Of interest in connection with the experiments made by Dr. C. W. Metz, Carnegie Institution of Washington, Collaborating Biologist, United States Public Health Service, in 1918 and 1919, an account of which was published in the Public Health Reports (vol. 35, No. 34), August 20, 1920, under the title "On the possibilities of using mosquito traps in antimalaria work," the following abstract of an article by Dr. E. Roubaud is of interest.

The article "Les conditions de nutrition des Anophèles en France (*Anopheles maculipennis*) et le rôle du bétail dans la prophylaxie du paludisme" appeared in the *Annales de l'Institut Pasteur* (vol. 34, No. 4), April, 1920. The abstract here given is taken from the *Tropical Diseases Bulletin* (vol. 16, No. 2), August 15, 1920.

"The author has been much impressed by the spontaneous disappearance of malaria in the settled parts of western Europe without any simultaneous extinction of the local species of Anopheles, and, in seeking for particular explanations of the phenomenon, he is again impressed by the fact that the common insect carrier, *Anopheles maculipennis*, has among other significant propensities a preference for the blood of domestic animals. As a consequence he has here elaborated with great sagacity and skill a theory of the natural protective function of farm animals against malaria; and the paper is well worthy of the most attentive perusal *in extenso*, for even those who reasonably dissent from the implied major premise, that a preference for one species can not have any other result than protection to another species, will find the argument stimulating and suggestive in a high degree and in many directions.

"Among the significant habits of *Anopheles maculipennis*, as observed in the settled parts of Europe, are, besides a marked natural preference for the blood of cattle, horses, etc., a strong reluctance to bite in the open, notwithstanding its daily-recurrent after-sundown flights abroad, and a corresponding predilection to seek its hosts in their sheds and stables. These habits are specifically characteristic in many parts of western Europe, where, indeed, the species is much oftener noticed as a larva than as an adult, the doings of the adult in a state of nature having until lately been so little observed that the older dipterologists doubted its being a blook sucker at all.

"In the Department of La Vendée, where the conditions under which *Anopheles maculipennis* lives are far from uniform, the author has been able to test his theory by the method of concomitant variations. The species is found all over the Department: in the extensive marshy tracts, the adults are amazingly abundant, though larvæ are not at all conspicuous in the spreading waters; in the pastoral tracts beyond the marshes, the larvæ are easily found in their limited breeding places, though the adults are not nearly so evident. In the pastoral tracts, cattle are plentiful, the insects and man are seldom found in contact, and malarial fevers are becoming more and more a memory: in the marsh tracts cattle are not so numerous nor so generally folded at night, and the insects come into human habitations, where they are sometimes a very plague.

"Thus, in La Vendée, the author demonstrates the working of an 'animal prophylaxis' progressing in efficiency with the progressive diminution of the 'anopheline density'—a state of affairs which in some other parts of Europe has culminated in equilibrium.

"The author proposes that along with the approved measures for reducing anopheline density in countries still notoriously malarious, the organization of 'animal prophylaxis' should be undertaken. He remarks that in some parts of the world enough is already known of the preferences of the dangerous local Anopheles for certain local domestic animals to warrant the deliberate employment of the shelters of these animals as gigantic traps. The first step in every case is an accurate study of the habits and predilections of each Anopheles species and of its relations to its preferential host; and it is this emphatic insistence upon, and logical demonstration of, the necessity of a sound basis in pure biology for rational sanitary enterprise that gives this paper a more than ordinary value."

BIRTH STATISTICS AND INFANT MORTALITY, 1919.[1]

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE BUREAU OF THE CENSUS FOR THE BIRTH REGISTRATION AREA.

In the birth registration area of the United States, exclusive of Rhode Island, which failed to send in transcripts of birth certificates, 1,365,585 infants were born alive in 1919. The total number of deaths in the same area was 791,732, the births exceeding the deaths by 573,853, or 72.5 per cent.

Birth Registration Area.

The birth registration area was established in 1915, when it comprised only 10 States, the 6 New England States, New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Minnesota, and the District of Columbia. In 1916 Maryland was added, and in 1917 Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin, Kansas, Utah, and Washington were added. No States were added in 1918, but in 1919 Oregon and California, covering the Pacific coast area, were admitted, and South Carolina, which extended the area along the Atlantic coast, was added, making the per cent of estimated population included about 58.

Comparison.

The number of births for the year 1919 compared with 1918 shows a decrease of 7 per cent in the registration area. Each State shows a decrease, the per cent ranging from less than 1 in Maryland to 10 in Utah and Wisconsin. This is in marked contrast to previous years, as the number of births had increased from year to year.

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[1] A similar summary for 1918 was published in Public Health Reports for May 14, 1920, pp. 1149-1152.